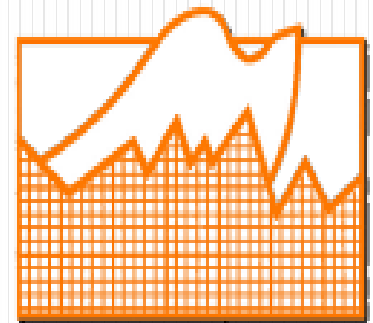


# Foreign Land Acquisition: Perspectives on Global Landgrabs

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# Foreign Land Acquisition (FLA)

- 'fancy term' used to describe phenomenon of capital-rich but resource-poor countries to acquire lands overseas
- FLA is the consequence of AND legitimate response to increasing food insecurity
- FLAs are happening at a massive scale globally!



## Food security IS a valid concern.... BUT

- 42% of land projects do not involve food production (cash crops, biofuels, plantation, etc.)
- \* Investments come from agribusiness, industry and financial institutions
- FLAs happening because of a few rich countries trying to secure food and energy supplies
- + agro/land speculators looking for new profit opportunities



# What are the drivers and motives for FLA?

## A. Instability of financial markets – land is tangible asset

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- Speculations around population growth, economic crisis, increased demand for food, commodities and agrofuels
- Speculation on increases in land value
- **Fertile soil has become a strategic global asset!**

## B. Rising demand for agrofuels & sources of raw materials

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- Industrialized countries' 'blending targets' for agrofuels (energy crops such as corn and sugarcane) into their energy supply
- heavy subsidies for agrofuel production
- Ethanol production grew by 15%
- Increased demand for rubber and others

## C. Securing food supplies

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- Resource poor but rich countries turn to offshore food production to secure long-term food supplies
- Asia (China, South Korea, Japan)
- Gulf States (Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia)

# Why is there increasing speculation in farmlands?



- Land degradation and land use change
- Expansion of agricultural production for non-human consumption → compromises food security

# Why is there increasing speculation in farmlands?

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- Instability in food and commodity markets due to speculation
- Impacts of climate change



# The case of San Mariano, Isabela, Philippines

International Fact Finding Mission (May 29-June 6, 2011)

KMP, IBON, Asian Peasant Coalition, Peoples Coalition on Food Sovereignty



***Population: 44,718 people; 7,796 households***

***Total land area: 146,950 hectares***

***Forest cover: 78,450 hectares***

***Watersheds: 17,046 hectares***



## **Isabela Bio-Ethanol and Cogeneration Project**

- proposed to be the Phils.' largest agrofuel development
- 11,000 hectares of monocrop sugar cane plantations and nurseries,
- expected to be operational by March 2012, producing 50 – 55 million liters of bio-ethanol /year
- Will consume around 6,000 cubic meters of water per day

- Joint venture by Japanese Itochu Corp. & JGC Group
- Local partner Green Future Innovations Inc.
- approved as 'Clean Development Mechanism' (CDM) project
- to earn carbon credits





*Sugarcane nurseries  
encroaching on farm  
lands*



*Indigenous Agta  
leaders testify that  
ancestral lands  
were grabbed  
through application  
of barangay  
captain*

*Expanses of land once used for food production are being cleared to make way for the Green Future Innovations Inc.'s co-generation and processing facilities.*



# IFFM conducts interviews with community folk



IFFM dialogue with EcoFuel and Green Future Innovations officials

# Summary of findings:

Japanese-Filipino consortium is exacerbating land grabbing conflicts and socio-economic inequities as well as undermining food self-sufficiency :

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- \* advancing claims that lands are available for conversion into sugar cane plantations;
- \* engaging in non-transparent lease negotiations - promoting flagrant violation of contractual commitments by facilitating the growing of sugar cane on these lands;

- \* leasing land from peasants through exploitative contracts with substantially lower compensation than would be earned if they continued to cultivate the land and sell their produce
- \* threatening the food security and the livelihoods of farm workers who are now planting sugar cane under highly exploitative conditions; and
- \* aggravating environmental devastation and destroying the natural climate change mitigation capacities of local ecosystems.
- \* increasing militarization and militarism to harass and intimidate people





*The bio-ethanol company should not come in because this is land that should not be taken over by a business. The land must be preserved to feed and provide for the people. We will defend the land and will not allow any company to enter and destroy Agta ancestral land. ---- Agta youth*